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UNCLAS HANOI 000550

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SUBJECT: REVIVING THE COUNTERNARCOTICS LOA

REF: 02 Hanoi 2490

1. (SBU) Pham Quang Vinh, Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Department of International Organizations, told poloff on March 7 that the "will is there for completing the LOA in the next several months. What remains is to work on the technical details." Vinh said that he would present an "unofficial, personal" response to the Department's non-paper (ref) "within a week."

2. (SBU) Vinh said that he will have a heavy travel schedule over the next six weeks; however, he pledged to convene an interministerial meeting at the deputy director level "soon" and see where everyone stands. He left open the possibility that, in case of non-consensus at the deputy level, he would request policy input at the vice-ministerial level.

3. (SBU) Without going into specifics, Vinh said that the Leahy language changes suggested in the Department's non-paper "look good." The two "toughest" issues remaining continue to be those concerning tax liabilities and immunity status for temporary personnel assigned to future drug assistance projects.

4. (SBU) Poloff told Vinh that the Department's non-paper from last October should serve as a roadmap when he carries out his interministerial deliberations. Vinh agreed to convey this message to his colleagues and leadership.

BURGHARDT